

As a long time user of satellite TV service and customer of Dish Network, I would like to express the strong support of our family for the proposed merger of Dish Network and Direct TV. My wife and I live approximately seven miles west of Reno, Nevada...a distance that might be considered 'from here to eternity' in terms of broadcast, telecommunications and internet connection services. While we are finally in the unique position of having access to competing cable services as well as satellite service from Dish Network, it has been a 'long road to hoe.' Not too many years ago, we would have been lost without the Dish Network service. Even now, with satellite, we still take advantage of and subscribe to the expanded level of service offered by one of the cable systems. So from the perspective of this Reno customer, it appears everyone wins. We receive better service and have more choices from which to select, two firms are currently benefitting from our business, and we are spending more on entertainment services than would be the case if we had fewer choices.

Now, before anyone thinks the picture is all rosy, I need to mention that high speed internet access at any reasonable price still appears to be a distant dream. Although Northern Nevada is one of the most extensively 'wired' regions in the country (i.e., DSL, fiber optics, cable internet access, etc.), it apparently will be years before the service is brought out to our neighborhood. And, while satellite internet access may be available, it does have some technical limitations and is very expensive.

The bottom line from our perspective is that to the extent competition and streamlining of carriers' operations improves services, leads to technical advances and lowers costs, we are all for it. And, we are betting (a term often associated with Nevada) these improvements are more likely to occur in a free and vibrant market (with the merger of Dish Network and Direct TV) than they will in a heavily regulated market (where satellite service is not allowed to fully compete with cable and the full range of telecommunications service providers).

While public policy actions often have difficulty dealing with 'the law of unintended consequences,' we feel the downside risks associated with the merger are far outweighed by the potential benefits. So, as a famous boxing referee from Reno is often quoted as saying, 'Let's get it on!'